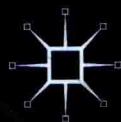


TOPOLOGIES OF FEAR IN CONTEMPORARY FICTION

*THE ANXIETIES OF POST-NATIONALISM
AND COUNTER TERRORISM*

SCOTT MCCLINTOCK



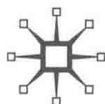
Topologies of Fear in Contemporary Fiction

The Anxieties of Post-Nationalism and Counter Terrorism

Scott McClintock

College of Letters and Sciences, National University, San Bernardino, CA, USA

palgrave
macmillan



© Scott McClintock 2015

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, Saffron House, 6–10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS.

Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The author has asserted his right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2015 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN 978–1–137–47890–0

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
McClintock, Scott.

Topologies of fear in contemporary fiction : the anxieties of post-nationalism and counter terrorism / Scott McClintock.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978–1–137–47890–0 (hardback)

1. Fiction—20th century—History and criticism. 2. Terrorism in literature. 3. Transnationalism in literature. 4. Fear in literature. 5. Violence in literature. 6. Terrorism—Prevention. I. Title.
PN3352.T35M33 2015

809.3'9355—dc23

2015013455

Typeset by MPS Limited, Chennai, India.

Topologies of Fear in Contemporary Fiction

Also by Scott McClintock

PYNCHON'S CALIFORNIA (*Co-edited with John Miller*)

Acknowledgments

Portions of chapter 2 were originally published as "The Penal Colony: Inscription of the Subject in Literature and Law, and Detainees as Legal Non-Persons at Camp X-Ray," *Comparative Literature Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2004 pages 153–67. This article is used by permission of The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Portions of chapter 3 were originally published as "Travels Outside the Empire: The Revision of Subaltern Historiography in Amitav Ghosh," *South Asian Review*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2007 pages 5–24. This article is used with copyright permission from the *South Asian Review*.

Portions of chapter 4 were originally published as "Images for a Godless World: Violence after the Sacred in the Millennial Indian Novel," *South Asian Review*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 2009 pages 73–96. This article is used with copyright permission from the *South Asian Review*.

The author would also like to express his gratitude to Paula Kennedy, Peter Cary and the staff at Palgrave Macmillan, who have made the process of seeing this book into print such a pleasure. And a final, special acknowledgment to the anonymous outside reader, whose incisive and detailed comments helped the author frame some of the larger arguments of the book and more sharply define many points. Any shortcomings or deficiencies that may remain are, of course, solely the author's responsibility.

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	vi
1 Introduction: The Geography of Anger and the Diaspora of Terrorism	1
2 Guantánamo Confidential: Inscription of the Subject in Literature and Law, and Detainees as Legal Non-Persons at Camp X-Ray	44
3 Travels Outside the Empire: The Revision of Subaltern Historiography in Amitav Ghosh	65
4 Images for a Godless World: Violence After the Sacred in the Millennial Indian Novel	85
5 The Sublime Object of Terror in Thomas Pynchon	110
6 Looking Backward at Joseph McElroy's <i>Lookout Cartridge</i> : Mining Neural Neighborhoods and Social Networks in Postmodern Fiction	151
7 Conclusion: Four Covering Principles for the Time of Terrorism	179
<i>Notes</i>	187
<i>Works Cited</i>	210
<i>Index</i>	220

1

Introduction: The Geography of Anger and the Diaspora of Terrorism

The central concern of this book is the impact of global terror networks and state counter-terrorism on 20th-century fiction and culture. It takes a comparative approach, examining literary responses to terrorism and counter-terrorism in writing by contemporary Indian and U.S. authors. The 9/11 (September 11, 2001) attacks became a "master signifier" of terrorism that was echoed after the attacks by militants in Mumbai in 2008, attacks that were quickly dubbed "26/11," with the implication they were "India's 9/11". However, the political violence ensuing from the Kashmir conflict at the root of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks goes back much further than 9/11, a history that is discussed in light of contemporary fiction by Indian-born authors who divide their time between the United States and India, whose writing bears comparison with American fiction reflecting the problem of political violence. Beyond this, both contemporary political violence and counter-terrorism are transnational and involve dispersed global networks. Unlike other studies which have focused mainly on the response to the 9/11 attacks in writing from the United States¹, this book is global and comparative in its approach, and emphasizes the contemporary fictional depiction of the transnational character of terrorism and counter-terrorism throughout the long 20th century, rather than only the literary reaction to the 9/11 attacks, even if the attacks on the World Trade Center do figure, most prominently, in Chapter 5, which takes up Thomas Pynchon's most recent novel, *Bleeding Edge*. The book examines what critical tools are available from contemporary literary theory and critical legal studies to develop what this book calls "anti-terror discourse critique."

The culture of terrorism as it exists today must be understood in a dual sense: as the impact of terrorism on cultural production, comprising literature and other cultural media, but also as the increasingly

mediated nature of terrorism, itself. Terrorist networks not only utilize mass media, including the Internet and digital media (martyrdom videos, videos of terrorist actions packaged by the terrorists, themselves, for press release, the role of Al-Fajr, the official media institution of Al-Qa'ida, which is responsible for disseminating all official publications of Al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, the role of social media in the viral spread of terrorist communiques and videos), but the "subject" of terrorism, what it references, is, increasingly, a media event, not in the sense that it is non-material (the bodies and buildings involved in terrorist incidents are very real and physical), but in the sense that terrorist acts exist only to be reproducible in media representations. The real subjects of terrorism disappear into their media reproductions, and with them, the order of "the real" itself. The concept of the cultural arena as a locus of political action really dates to the New Left, the "making and unmaking" of which by the media was so well documented in the book by Todd Gitlin with that subtitle. In the political science and security literature on terrorism, the "theater-of-terrorism" approach has been a staple since Rand Corporation security expert Brian Jenkins's 1975 study, *International Terrorism: A New Kind of Warfare*.²

This chapter introduces the theme of the production of terrorists and terrorist bodies which will be developed in the following one, also centrally concerned with a logic of making and unmaking, appearance and disappearance of terrorist bodies and subjects by the media. Materials not covered in other chapters will be explored in this one: Dorothea Dieckmann's novel, *Guantánamo*; Marc Falkoff's edited collection, *Poems from Guantánamo: The Detainees Speak*; legal documents, such as *The Report of The Constitution Project's Task Force on Detainee Treatment* (2013) and the Department of Justice white paper on "Lawfulness of a Lethal Operation Directed Against a U.S. citizen Who is a Senior Operational Leader of Al-Qa'ida or an Associated Force," as well as other documents which reflect current legal aspects of counter-terrorism discussed in other chapters; the Errol Morris documentary, *Standard Operating Procedure* (2008) about Abu Ghraib; and Arjun Appadurai's book, *Fear of Small Numbers*, for its theoretical framework for understanding the contemporary nature of global violence (the "fear" of Appadurai's title is echoed in mine), to establish a framework for the analysis of the "discourse" of terror, and "anti-terror discourse" critique, which will be pursued in the rest of this book.

What This Book Promises, and What It Does Not

This book will consider literary works that are representative of contemporary literature, and which exemplify the cultural impact, the

literary responses to, or mediations of, discourses related to terrorism and counter-terrorism, in the "longer" 20th century, beginning with Franz Kafka's "In the Penal Colony" ("In der Strafkolonie"), in chapter 2 (analyzed in light of its contemporary relevance for the topos of the prison island, in Guantánamo); a suite of works by the Bengali-born author, Amitav Ghosh: *In an Antique Land*, *The Circle of Reason*, and *The Glass Palace* in chapter 3; *Shalimar the Clown*, by Mumbai-born author, Salman Rushdie, and *Sacred Games*, by New Delhi-born author, Vikram Chandra, in chapter 4; Thomas Pynchon's novels, *Bleeding Edge* and *Against the Day*, as well as Hari Kunzru's novel, *Gods Without Men*, in chapter 5; and Joseph McElroy's novel, *Lookout Cartridge*, in chapter 6. Additionally, this chapter will take up German author Dorothea Dieckmann's novel, *Guantánamo*, the only direct literary treatment of the American detainee facility in this corpus of literary texts. In addition to these core literary works, a wide range of non-literary texts comprising a "discourse" of terrorism and counter-terrorism will be examined in this book, extending from other cultural media (photographs, documentary film), to terrorism case law, analytical articles by constitutional law scholars, critical legal philosophy, and the Congressional Record.

Naturally, a governing assumption behind such an eclectic assembly of study texts is that the field of "culture" that includes literature is characterized by exchanges between different modes of knowledge, and that literature, at least when it is investigated for the influence on it of terrorism and counter-terrorism, cannot be separated from other discourses, including social science, economy, the law or politics. The analytical tools for studying literature, it is assumed in this book, may also be employed outside of literature in all of the fields concerned with the production of social knowledge: linguistic and rhetorical devices condition all of the domains mediated by language.

An important influence on the approach taken in this book is the broad model of the political (or social) imaginary, as it has been developed by such figures as Cornelius Castoriadis, Louis Marin, Wolfgang Iser, and Charles Taylor, since the central focus of this book is the place of terrorism in the political imagination. These theories to varying degrees owe a significant debt to Lacanian psychoanalysis, but are perhaps equally appropriately viewed as developments or refinements of concepts going back to the classical social theory of symbolic interactionism, associated with George Herbert Mead, Charles Horton Cooley, Herbert Blumer, and others. The premise that human beings act based on meanings which are symbolically constructed and derived from social interaction underlies all of these approaches, divergent as they are in their details. Castoriadis, in his 1975 book, *The Imaginary Institution*

of Society, had maintained that core “imaginary significations” are the laces that tie societies together, in what classical, Durkheimian sociology would have called “social solidarity,” and that these imaginary significations shape a society’s sense of reality through differentiating by way of selecting (legein), and making order by way of combining and acting (teukhein), processes bearing some analogy to the paradigmatic and syntagmatic functions of linguistics. For Lacan, as for Louis Althusser, the processes of self-identification involve a split within the subject into a self and other, not totally unlike the I and the Me (as the socialized aspects of an individual self) in Mead, or the “looking glass self” of Cooley (which is not the same, of course, but which might nevertheless be compared to Lacan’s “mirror stage”). In the tradition of ideology critique associated with Althusser and Lacan, the socialized aspects of individual selves are where ideology lays hold of subjects as an intervention of power (what Althusser famously dubbed the “interpellation” of the subject). Applied to literary interpretation, ideology describes a literary work’s relationship to social practices and interpretive norms, in other words, a social imaginary. An Althusserian would likely insist that any work of literature, and any act of reading or interpretation, cannot help being distorted by the domination or power of social practices and norms, even if she or he acknowledged some limited, “relative autonomy” of literature. While giving the influence on interpretation of these social practices, norms and conventions their due, Iser did not regard the political imaginary as particularly more privileged or influential on literary interpretation than other aspects of literature, including aesthetics. In his book, *The Fictive and The Imaginary*, he tended to see the social and fictive, or aesthetic, modes, as coexisting within literary works, and was interested in the more fundamental question, for him, of the derivation of the human need for representations, or fictions, ultimately disclosed as an anthropological issue. Rather than necessarily referring to an actual world where there are criteria for truth, fiction establishes a new referential dimension that is not descriptive or pre-given, but emerges in a “playground” in the space between the mutually exclusive worlds of the artificial, textual referentiality and the real, extra-textual world. The relationship between literary works of art and society is therefore, for Iser, indeterminate, rather than society determining the interpretation of art. Setting aside the issue of the dependence of literature and culture on ideology, or their degree of freedom from it, I will be very engaged in this book with investigating the sway of terrorism and the social discourses mobilized against it, and with the figure of terrorism in a political imaginary that exerts a

pull on 20th-century literature and culture, almost like an “attractor” in certain kinds of mathematics of dynamic systems, such that regardless of their starting point, literary works, particularly in the contemporary period, tend to evolve or gravitate toward the figure of the terrorist, in a manner that might extend beyond the texts I consider in this book, to include works reaching back to Henry James’s 1886 novel, *The Princess Casamassima*, and forward a century from there to Joan Didion’s 1977 novel, *A Book of Common Prayer*, Doris Lessing’s 1985 novel, *The Good Terrorist*, Philip Roth’s 1997 novel, *American Pastoral*, John Updike’s 2006 novel, *Terrorist*, and most of the novels of Don DeLillo (but especially his 1977 novel, *Players*, his 1991 novel, *Mao II*, and the 2007 novel, *Falling Man*, which is directly concerned with 9/11). I’ll return to the metaphor of the “attractor” below, when I discuss the “time of terrorism” and the “prophetic history” that seems to draw all of the forces and timelines of history towards 9/11.

Taylor has been interested in the social imagination in a different way, in his work on secularism as a crisis of the subject of modernity, whose symbolic structures have become progressively uncoupled from traditional representations that linked the social order vertically with what transcended it (especially, the divine). Drawing on Benedict Anderson’s formulation of the political as “imagined communities,” Taylor contrasts the horizontal linkages of simultaneity binding individuals into communal identifications, which have been strengthened by modern technologies and media such as print, with the weakening of the vertical ties between individuals and the transcendent that had been more deeply rooted in traditional societies. I will return to the issue of secularization in greater detail in chapters 4 and 5 of this book.

Louis Marin’s analysis of two paintings, one by Philippe de Champaigne, titled “Christ on the Cross,” from a little before 1650, the other a portrait of Louis XIV by Hyacinthe Rigaud from 1701, takes up the political imaginary in the conflict he describes between these two images of the body-in-power, that of the “divine king” in the painting by de Champaigne, and the sovereign whose authority descends from the divine, in the political doctrine of the divine right of kings buttressing absolute monarchy. The juxtaposition of the two paintings, in Marin’s examination, represents what he calls a “theologico-political moment in the history of power” (“Body-of-Power” 422). The “figure of the King” and the figure of the “body-in-power” or the Royal body, in Marin’s semiological analysis, “name,” he says, “the ‘imaginary’ of the King – that portion of imagination that the Prince’s representation contains” (423). Marin’s subtle exegesis of the two images is exemplary,

for my purposes, in a couple of ways. I will be significantly concerned in this chapter, and the following one, with the semiological analysis of images of terrorist bodies as they relate to the political or social imaginary concerning terrorism. Secondly, in the next chapter, I will be going into a matter that Marin's survey of the figure of the sovereign bears upon: the power of the sovereign revived, in a certain way I will discuss in the next chapter, by the logic of the "state of exception" in the emerging legal framework of the war on terror in the Bush administration.

Another study by Marin bears on the theoretical orientation of this book. *Utopics: The Semiological Play of Textual Spaces* begins as an analysis of the work by Thomas More that coined the word "utopia," as a paradigmatic text for the investigation of "utopic signifying practice" and "utopic and pseudo-utopic spaces" (xiii). The book's concern with utopic signifying practices develops a complex argument about the neutrality of utopian spaces as in-between categories or locales, in terms of the function of the "neutral" in Kantian and Hegelian dialectics, bringing this discussion of the logical category of neutrality into Husserlian phenomenology and the role of the imagination in it. I will not be concerned with the details of the book's argument here, although Marin's elaboration of the logical category of neutrality is highly relevant for my own discussion of the "state of exception" in the law of the war on terror, below. What is suggestive, for me, is Marin's exploration of islands and cityscapes in terms of what he calls utopic signifying practices. Marin reminds us of the semantic range of the etymological root of "utopia," with valences that connect physical locales with rhetorical or textual representation. As has been widely discussed, "topoi" are both physical places and figures of speech, conventions or "commonplaces." Perhaps the most seminal study of topoi in comparative literature remains the magisterial book by Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, which examined the roots of modern European literatures in the commonplaces, metaphors, and turns of phrase that became literary "constants," linking modern European literatures with the classical past, through the mediation of the humanism of the Middle Ages. Much of Marin's book similarly identifies structural units in what he calls utopic signifying practices that form a coherent unit of analysis from the heterogeneous materials he considers in the book. Although I will not be adopting the details of Marin's argument here, the general method of analysis of "topoi" will be highly influential in what follows. In fact, I will be suggesting that a type of "topological" analysis of the discourse of terrorism is brought to light by the materials I consider in this book.

Although Marin's book begins with the developed treatment of the island utopia of Sir Thomas More, the island space this book begins with is no utopia: it is, rather, the prison island of Guantánamo where America has been detaining individuals swept up in the dragnet of its war on terror. Marin does consider the presence of criminals and the economically marginalized underclass in cities in chapter 7 of his book, in a way which is suggestive for my own discussion of "enemy combatants" in this book. And the relationship between urban landscapes and "topoi," especially the memory exercises built around the "method of loci," will be a significant concern in chapter 6 of this book, in my discussion of Joseph McElroy's novel, *Lookout Cartridge*.

As I will discuss in that chapter, McElroy acknowledges the phenomenology of Gaston Bachelard as an influence on his writing. The concept of "topos" or space played a central role in the phenomenology of Bachelard, even leading to an approach he called "topo-analysis," a term which might apply not only to my discussion of episodes in McElroy's novel dealing with domestic interior spaces, as well as urban city spaces, but for much of what I undertake in the rest of this book, as well. This approach has been influential, as well, for Arjun Appadurai, whose *Modernity at Large* and, more recently, *Fear of Small Numbers* have helped me to think through the complex relations between modernity, globalization and spatiality. Many of the formulations in this chapter (the geography of anger, the diaspora of terrorism, states of insecurity, intimate bodily violence) are derived from the latter book. I will turn next to a more detailed presentation of the concepts of spatiality and human geography in the analysis of terrorism and counter-terrorism, but first, having identified some of the methods and starting points that influence what this book promises, I want to say a word about what it does not promise, and cannot deliver.

Despite the title of this book, and its claim that the literary texts considered in it are in some way representative or exemplary of contemporary fiction, clearly, there is no attempt in this book to present any form of systematic or comprehensive survey. While the publication dates or periods of composition represented by the literary texts I consider do not comprehensively extend across the longer 20th century, the literary texts I analyze do cover this chronological range in their content, and they are therefore historiographical in their implication that even if the influence of terrorism on cultural history only became fully intelligible in the period after the Second World War, the longer 20th century has been pulled toward it as the motivating force of history. Two of the novels I deal with are historical fiction, which addresses

events dating to the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Amitav Ghosh's novel, *The Glass Palace*, and Thomas Pynchon's *Against the Day*). Kafka's tale was published in 1914, on the eve of the First World War, and it thus shares an historical horizon with both of these other contemporary historical novels. McElroy's novel takes place in the 1970s during the Vietnam War, but self-consciously aims to be a history of America from the 1950s–70s, and is proleptic, in ways I'll argue, of our own time. The other novels I consider are more or less contemporary in their setting, and deal with a period (our own) that, I argue, is defined not by "epochal" events such as world wars³, or even the Cold War, but by the particular form of political violence we call terrorism, even if this type of political violence has a much longer history that most of the works considered in this book address in one way or another, and which will be one of the central topics of this book.

Despite the wide range of places, political causes, and ethnic groups that have been associated with the political violence of terrorism, a range that is fairly represented by the material I consider in this book, one of the arguments of this book is that the influence of terrorist political violence on literature and culture can only be grasped through a method of what Jean-Francois Lyotard called *petits récits*, small or intimate narratives of history, as contrasted with a history I might call "monumental" or "epochal," a history defined with reference to large scale, mass events affecting entire communities, if not the whole world, itself (events like world wars, genocides, and the like). So if the history I am dealing with in this book is a history of violence, it is not the violence of "epochal" or monumental history, and the influence of terrorist violence on history and culture precisely resists and destabilizes the historical "meta-narratives" that are benchmarked by "epochal" events, and which typically involve conflicts between nation states. It is in this sense I refer to the anxieties of post-nationalism. Nevertheless, I would argue, the political violence of terrorism does define late modernity⁴ and what Appadurai has called "high globalization" (*Small Numbers* 2) in essential ways which means that the entire field of culture and literature during this long period, what I will call, in an unoriginal way, the long 20th century, has been shaped, in its warp and woof, by it, both directly and indirectly. Terrorist violence, I contend, defines the long 20th century, perhaps even more significantly than the world wars or ethnocides that scarred it, which in some ways were delayed symptoms of the 19th century era of imperialist conflicts. Similarly, while there is some analogy between the argument I make in this book and the argument of postcolonial theory, that the history of colonization and

decolonization impacted culture in fundamental ways, some explicit, and others more mediated and indirect, in its historical genesis imperialism was a product of the 19th century, or even earlier. Even if decolonization was delayed until the Second World War left a power vacuum of erstwhile European imperial metropolises, I see it as a 19th century phenomenon, nevertheless. It is the peculiar violence of political terrorism that, in my view, defines the 20th century, and it is a type of violence that is not exactly assimilable to national liberation struggles, even if it may overlap, at times, with them, as we will see. This kind of political violence, I argue, acts something like a "strange attractor," drawing the political lines of force and history toward it, and its "master signifier," 9/11, even if the history of this kind of violence is much longer than 9/11, a history that is largely unknown, or has been forgotten. We need a newer paradigm than postcolonial theory, I argue, to grasp its essential contours and effectivity. If concepts of subalternity and hegemony derived from Antonio Gramsci were master tropes of postcolonial theory, I believe what succeeds them in the era when counter-terrorism has emerged as the dominant issue shaping cultural and historical forces are the concepts of sovereignty and the formal logic of the state of exception in anti-terror discourse and law, as I develop in this chapter and the next one.

Finally, I want to say a word or two about the comparison of American and Anglo-Indian literature in this book, before turning to the other details that will take up the remainder of this chapter. The reasons for comparing these two bodies of writing may not be immediately evident. One of the grounds for the comparison is what I earlier indicated: the symmetry between the mass terror attacks of 9/11 in New York, and the 26/11, 2008 (November 26, 2008), Fedayeen attacks by a group affiliated with the Kashmiri independence movement in Mumbai, events which have either, retrospectively, influenced some of the novels I discuss or, prospectively, been anticipated by them. Beyond these very specific events that link the two countries, there is a broader relationship between them, particularly as the United States looks to increase its presence and influence in the Pacific Rim (what might be termed the Obama doctrine⁵, in a President who spent a significant part of his childhood growing up in Indonesia), which includes strategic partnering between the United States and India at both the economical and national security levels. Further, both countries find themselves directly involved in overlapping counter-terrorism campaigns in South Asia. The United States is just winding down its longest war in Afghanistan, and some of the same Taliban fighters (as well as

a much broader, transnational coalition of jihadis who come from all over Central Asia and the Middle East) cross over the Khyber Pass and pass through the tribal areas in the north of Afghanistan to fight in Kashmir, where India is engaged in its longest counter-insurgency warfare, as we will see in chapter 4 of this book. Another example linking the experiences of India and the United States in the phenomenon of transnational terrorism is that one of the architects of the 26/11 terrorist attacks in Mumbai was an American citizen, David Headley (Daood Sayed Gilani), who had been working as an informant for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency in Pakistan before becoming a radicalized Islamic militant and getting involved in the Kashmir conflict. Headley was convicted in 2013 by a U.S. federal court and sentenced to 35 years in prison for his role in plotting the Mumbai attacks. His case represents just one example of the transnational networks of terrorism that link the United States and India, in a history that goes back at least to the Indo-Irish-German conspiracy between 1914 and 1917 to instigate an uprising against the British Raj during World War I, the conspirators in which included radical nationalists in India, the Ghadar Party in the United States and the Indian independence committee in Germany, and which led to the indictment of eight Indian nationalists of the Ghadar Party by a federal grand jury on a charge of conspiracy to form a military enterprise against the United Kingdom, and the “Hindu–German Conspiracy Trial” in the District Court in San Francisco on November 12, 1917, one of the most famous terrorism cases in the period, although it has been forgotten since. This little-known history forms part of the background of Amitav Ghosh’s novel, *The Glass Palace*, which I will discuss in chapter 3 of this book. India, of course, has a much longer experience than the United States of dealing with domestic insurgency and political terrorism, student unrest, and separatist movements, that led to the declaration of a state of emergency by Indira Gandhi in 1975, encompassing sweeping dragnets of her political opposition, detentions without trial, and extraordinary claims of executive power that parallel the Bush administration’s war on terror, in ways I will discuss in chapter 4. (Indira Gandhi, herself, it will be recalled, was assassinated by two of her elite Sikh bodyguards in reprisal for the Indian army’s June, 1984 assault on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the holiest site in the Sikh religion.) So another of the points of comparison between United States and India, and their literatures, is that both countries have struggled to reconcile the conflict between developing toward counter-terror, national security states, and preserving their identities as liberal democracies.⁶